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ABSTRACT

Compiled for use by Missouri vocational educators in the classroom or workplace, this instructional unit is the third of four designed to aid students and adults in assessing instructional materials and recognizing and/or correcting biased statements or illustrations. Its objective is for the participant to be able to examine materials for sex fairness and to recognize examples of sex bias. Materials provided include a unit and specific objectives, suggested activities for instructors and participants, list of instructional materials, unit references, information sheet(s), transparency masters, handout(s), and activity sheets. (Much of this unit's content is adapted from "Guidelines for the Creative Use of Biased Materials in a Non-Biased Way" by Women on Words and Images.) (YLB)

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EXAMINING MATERIALS FOR SEX FAIRNESS

An Instructional Unit

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1981

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FOREWORD

This instructional unit has been compiled for use by Missouri vocational educators in the classroom or in workshops. Much of its content and activities were adapted from Guidelines for Sex-Fair Vocational Education Materials by Women on Words and Images under an HEW grant. It is hoped the unit will serve as an aid to assist educators and students in assessing instructional materials and recognizing and/or correcting biased statements or illustrations.

James D. Good
Project Coordinator

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EXAMINING MATERIALS FOR SEX FAIRNESS
UNIT III

UNIT OBJECTIVE

After completing this unit, the participant should be able to examine materials for sex fairness and to recognize examples of sex bias.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, the participant should be able to:

1. Recognize the use of negative and/or biased written language in teaching materials of all kinds.
2. Evaluate the use of explicit and/or subtle bias in treatment of occupational and social roles of men and women in teaching materials.
3. Identify omissions of one sex or the other in material concerning nontraditional careers and in historical or biographical materials.
4. Identify biased and stereotyped references to physical appearance of women and men in teaching materials.
5. Recognize misrepresentations of the sexes in audio materials.

EXAMINING MATERIALS FOR SEX FAIRNESS
UNIT III

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

I. Instructors

- A. Provide participants with unit objectives.
- B. Provide participants with information outlines and activity sheets as needed.
- C. Make transparencies.
- D. Discuss unit and specific objectives.
- E. Discuss activities to be completed by participants.
- F. Provide materials needed for the completion of unit activities.

II. Participants

- A. Read objectives.
- B. Read information outlines and activity sheets.
- C. Discuss with instructor and other participants the objectives for each unit.
- D. Discuss with instructor and other participants the activities to be completed.
- E. Consult resources provided by the instructor for completion of unit activities. Research additional information as needed.
- F. Complete each activity.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

I. Unit Contents

- A. Objectives
- B. Information sheets

C. Transparency masters

1. TM-III-1: USE OF GENDER DESCRIBING OCCUPATIONS
2. TM-III-2: GENERIC USAGE
3. TM-III-3: MALE BEFORE FEMALE REFERENT
4. TM-III-4: EXCLUSIONARY LANGUAGE
5. TM-III-5: LEADERSHIP ROLES
6. TM-III-6: NON-PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION
7. TM-III-7: WOMEN AS POSSESSIONS OF MEN
8. TM-III-8: WOMEN AS GIRLS
9. TM-III-9: CONSISTENT LANGUAGE AND ILLUSTRATIONS
10. TM-III-10: JOB ASSOCIATIONS BY SEX
11. TM-III-11: EMOTIONAL TRAITS BY SEX
12. TM-III-12: FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES
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17. TM-III-17: DRESS AND GROOMING
18. TM-III-18: STEREOTYPING IN AUDIO MATERIALS

D. Activity sheets

1. AS-III-1: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
LANGUAGE
2. AS-III-2: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
ROLES--OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL
3. AS-III-3: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
OMISSIONS
4. AS-III-4: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

II. Unit References

- A. Good, James D., ed. Untapped Resources in Vocational Education: Trainer/Teacher Guide. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri, Instructional Materials Lab., 1979.
- B. Guidelines for the Creative Use of Biased Materials in a Non-Biased Way. Women on Words and Images. Reprinted by Missouri Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979.
- C. Guidelines for Sex-Fair Vocational Education Materials. Women on Words and Images. Reprinted by Missouri Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979.
- D. Matthews, Martha and McCune, Shirley. Try It, You'll Like It! Washington, D.C.: Resource Center on Sex Roles in Education, 1978.
- E. Smith, Amanda J. and Farris, Charlotte J. Pioneering Programs in Sex Equity: A Teacher's Guide. Arlington, Virginia: American Vocational Association, 1980.

EXAMINING MATERIALS FOR SEX FAIRNESS
UNIT III

INFORMATION SHEET

I. Language

- A. Issue: The use of gender to describe occupations or positions assumes that the occupation or position is best suited to that sex. (TM-III-1)

Guideline: Use a neutral term when describing an occupation rather than a sex-specific term. (NOTE: The Department of Labor has rephrased occupational titles to eliminate sex bias.)

- B. Issue: The generic use of words such as "man," "sir," etc., implies that only males take part in these activities. (TM-III-2)

Guideline: Use a neutral term that includes both sexes; the universal male term perpetuates sex bias.

- C. Issue: Consistent placement of the male referent before the female referent implies greater importance to the male. (TM-III-3)

Guideline: Use inclusive terms or alternate the order of gender referents.

- D. Issue: Sex fairness requires abandoning the conventional use of the generic "he" or use of "she"; women are excluded by the former practice, men by the latter. (TM-III-4)

Guideline: Use sex-neutral or sex-fair language.

- E. Issue: Men are usually shown in leadership roles; this is caused in part by use of the generic "he." (TM-III-5)

Guideline: Include women and men equally in leadership roles.

- F. Issue: Often in materials non-parallel construction is used; this imbalance usually keeps women in the subordinate role. (TM-III-6)

Guideline: Men and women should be referred to in a consistent way.

- G. Issue: Women often are addressed as possessions of men. (TM-III-7)

Guideline: Women should be referred to as having their own identity, in the same way that men are.

- H. Issue: Adult women are referred to as girls and ladies; these terms may be inappropriate (TM-III-8)

Guideline: Use the word "woman" or "female" for adult women as you would use "man" and "male" for adult men.

- I. Issue: A publication may use sex-fair language initially, then lapse into use of the generic "he." (NOTE: Some materials will use completely sex-fair language, but illustrations will show only one sex.) (TM-III-9)

Guideline: Sex-fair language must be consistent throughout the material so that options are successfully provided for both sexes.

II. Roles: Occupational and Social

- A. Issue: Certain jobs are associated with women (nurse, secretary) and other jobs with men (plumber, architect). (TM-III-10)

Guideline: Sex fairness requires that all occupations be presented as possible options for both females and males.

- B. Issue: Character and emotional traits are shown as sex linked; males are portrayed in leadership roles, and as emotionally insensitive and physically strong, while women are portrayed as inept and overly sensitive. (TM-III-11)

Guideline: Both males and females should be portrayed as displaying the full range of human traits.

- C. Issue: Home and family responsibilities are linked to the female sex. (NOTE: Men are not cautioned against considering careers which could interfere with family responsibilities.) (TM-III-12)

Guideline: Both men and women should be encouraged to consider all types of work; if family considerations are discussed, they should be addressed to both sexes.

- D. Issue: Women and men are assigned traditional roles: males as breadwinners, females as caretaker of home and children. (TM-III-13)

Guideline: Work within the family should not be narrowly assumed to be either masculine or feminine; avoid the exclusive portrayal of the two-parent nuclear family.

- E. Issue: Family relationships irrelevant to the job are sometimes included. (TM-III-14)

Guideline: Omit extraneous family references; if the relationship is relevant, include it for men as well as for women.

III. Omissions

- A. Issue: Many vocational education materials are sex-biased as a result of significant omissions; consequently students are denied adequate information on which to base their career choices. (NOTE: The movement of females into nontraditional fields is occasionally mentioned in a token way.) (TM-III-15)

Guideline: Adequate discussion concerning nontraditional career choices must be included for males and females.

- B. Issue: Achievements of women are often omitted in historical or biographical material. (NOTE: For example, the contributions of Sakakawea, a Shoshone Indian woman, to the Lewis and Clark expedition are largely unknown.) (TM-III-16)

Guideline: When giving historical information or biographical references, it is essential to research the field for examples of female contributions.

IV. Physical Appearance

- A. Issue: Basic grooming advice for women and men appears in some vocational education materials; however, female workers are too often portrayed as decorative objects. (TM-III-17)

Guidelines: Physical descriptions irrelevant to the performance of the job should be omitted.

V. Audio Materials

- A. Issue: Most audio material is narrated by a male voice; this practice reinforces the stereotype of the male as primary authority.
(NOTE: Occasionally, a female voice is used for a stereotyped occupation, such as nurse, child care worker, or elementary teacher.)
(TM-III-18)

Guideline: A balanced audio narrative uses both female and male voices throughout the full range of situations and occupational tasks.



"The postman delivered the mail to the housewife."



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'He' before 'She' implies greater Importance.





"An executive dictates company policy to his staff."



"Two prominent speakers, Dr. Bernard Brown and Elvira White, who also holds a PhD...."



"Jim Goodfellow and his wife, Jane, were seen out walking."



"Rosy Bennett and the other girls in the office took an early lunch."



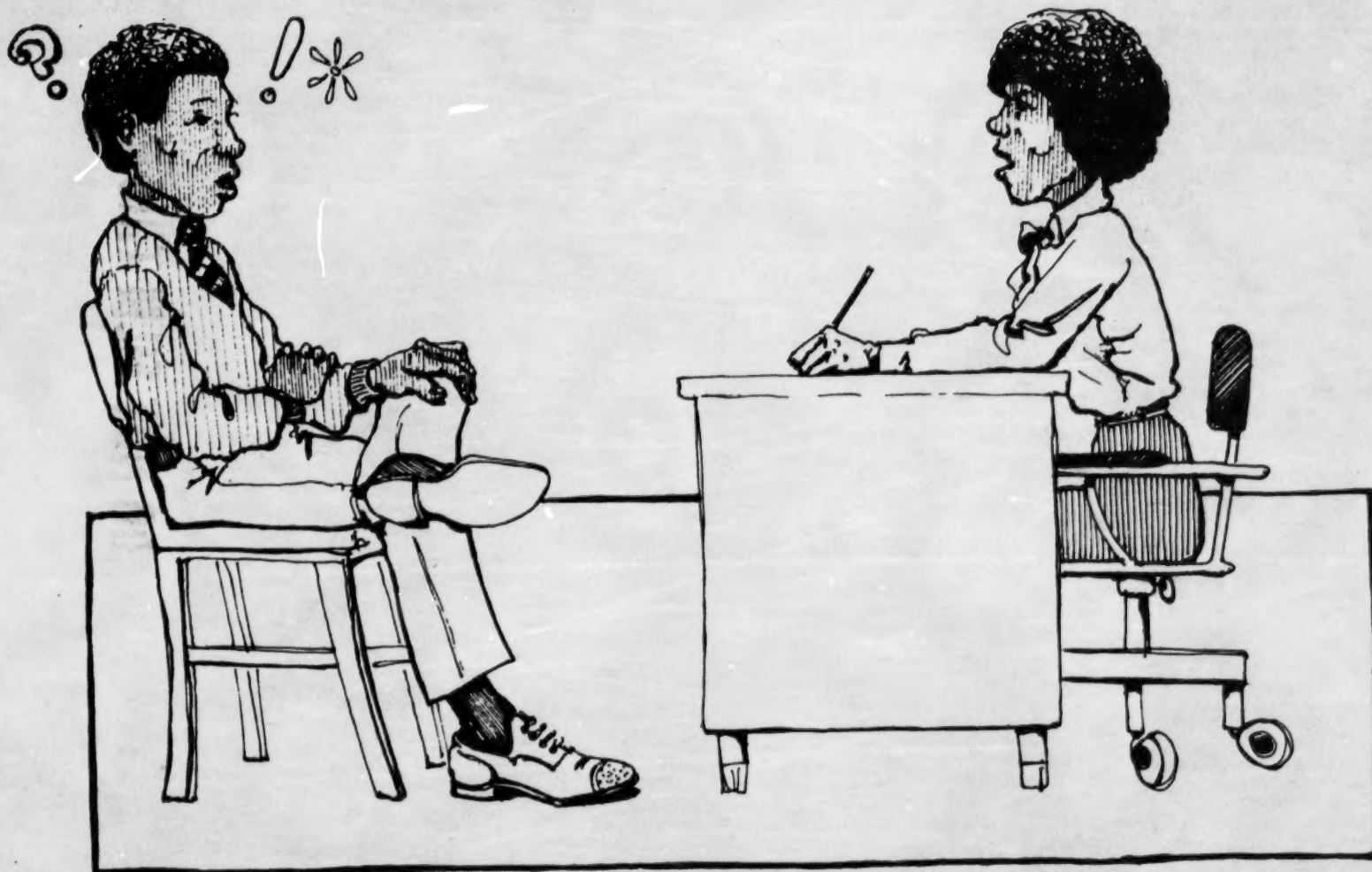
“Men and women in advertising must have a keen sense of what is appealing.”



"Because of the nurse's quick action, the welder's injury was not more serious."



"The supervisor's gruff manner brought tears to the clerk's eyes."



"Are you planning to have any children in the near future, Mr. Boone?"



Typically women and men are assigned traditional roles.



"Hello, Jane Dawson, wife of Henry Dawson, mother of Tammy Dawson, can I help you?"



"Men in telephone repair work earn an above average wage."



"Lewis and Clark deserve credit for discovering and exploring the American West."



"Are you fellows SURE I'm not supposed to wear coveralls too?"

"And the momma bear opened her door and saw..."



TM-III-18

ACTIVITY SHEET 1: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
LANGUAGE

The four checklists in ACTIVITY SHEETS 1 through 4 are to be used at the completion of the earlier parts of Unit III. Each checklist deals with a specific concern in evaluating materials for sex bias. Checklist 1 deals with the issues or concerns raised in transparencies 1 through 9; checklist 2, those issues in transparencies 10 through 14; checklist 3, transparencies 15 and 16; and checklist 4, transparency 17. As you are reviewing materials for possible selection, consider the following questions.

1. Is the generic "he" used to include both males and females when sex is unspecified? Is the generic "she" used where the antecedent is stereotypically female?
2. Is a universal male term used when the word is meant to include both sexes?
3. When referring to both sexes, does the male term consistently precede the female?
4. Are occupational titles used with "-man" as the suffix?
5. When a woman or man holds a nontraditional job, is there unnecessary focus on the person's sex?
6. Are nonparallel terms used in referring to males and females?
7. Are the words "women" and "female" replaced by pejorative or demeaning synonyms?
8. Are women described in terms of their appearance or marital and family status while men are described in terms of accomplishments or titles?
9. Are women presented as either dependent on, or subordinate to, men?
10. Does the writer use sex-fair language initially, then slip into the use of the generic "he?"
11. Is the issue of sexual equality diminished by lumping the problems of women, 51 percent of the adult population, with those of minorities?

Source: Guidelines for Sex-Fair Vocational Education Materials. Women on Words and Images. Reprinted by Missouri Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979.

ACTIVITY SHEET 2: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
ROLES--OCCUPATIONAL AND SOCIAL

1. Are all occupations presented as appropriate to qualified persons of either sex, or are certain jobs automatically associated with women and others associated with men?
2. Are housekeeping and family responsibilities still a prime consideration for females in choosing and maintaining a career?
3. Is it assumed that the boss, executive, or professional will be male, and the assistant or helpmate will be female?
4. In addition to professional responsibilities, is it assumed that women will also have housekeeping tasks at their place of business?
5. Is tokenism apparent, in an occasional reference to women or men in nontraditional jobs, while the greatest proportion of the material remains job-stereotyped?
6. Are men and women portrayed as having sex-linked personality traits which influence their working abilities?
7. Are women and men assigned the traditional roles of male as breadwinner and female as caretaker of home and children, needing permission from her husband in order to work.
8. Is a woman's marital status stated when it is irrelevant and when the same information about a man is not available?
9. In a family where both adults work, is it assumed that females are responsible for indoor housekeeping chores and males for outdoor lawn and car chores?
10. If a couple work together in a business, is it assumed that she will assist him?
11. Is information included about family relationships which is not relevant to the job?
12. Has the writer overlooked opportunities to present equality in occupational or social roles?

Source: Guidelines for Sex-Fair Vocational Education Materials. Women on Words and Images. Reprinted by Missouri Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979.

ACTIVITY SHEET 3: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
OMISSIONS

1. Does the text deal with the increasing movements of both men and women into nontraditional occupations?
2. In historical and biographical references, are women adequately acknowledged for their achievements?
3. Are quotes and anecdotes from women in history and from important living women used as frequently as those from men?
4. Is there acknowledgement of the limitations placed on women in the past?
5. Are women identified by their husband's names?
6. When an historical sexist situation is cited, is it qualified, when appropriate, as past history no longer accepted?

Source: Guidelines for Sex-Fair Vocational Education Materials. Women on Words and Images. Reprinted by Missouri Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979.

ACTIVITY SHEET 4: A CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING MATERIALS;
PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

1. Are females described in terms of their physical appearance, and men in terms of accomplishment or character?
2. Is grooming advice focused only on females, and presented as a factor in being hired?
3. Is a smiling face considered advisable only for a woman in many occupations?
4. Are men shown as taller and more vigorous, women as smaller and more fragile?
5. Are women presented as more adroit with a typewriter than a saw, and men as dextrous and at ease with tools and machines, and baffled when confronted with a filing cabinet?

Source: Guidelines for Sex-Fair Vocational Education Materials. Women on Words and Images. Reprinted by Missouri Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1979.